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A

LETTER

TO

HIS GRACE,

THE DUKE OF GRAFTON,

First Commissioner of His Majesty's
Treasury.

K. Wilkes

*Vacare culpâ magnum est solatium ; præsertim
cum habeam duas res quibus me sustentem ,
optimarum artium scientiam , & maximarum
rerum gloriam , quarum altera mihi vivo nun-
quam eripietur , altera ne mortuo quidem.*

CICERO.



P A R I S.

M. DCC. LXVII.



Paris, Dec. 12, 1766.

MY LORD,

I am not yet recover'd from the astonishment, into which I was thrown by your grace's *verbal* message, in answer to my letter of the first of November. In a conversation I had with *Colonel Fitzroy* at the Hotel d'Espagne, he did me the honour of assuring me, that I shou'd find his brother my real and sincere friend, extremely desirous to concur in doing me justice, that he was to tell me this from your grace, but that many interesting particulars relative to me cou'd not be communicated by letter, nor by the post. I fondly believ'd these

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obliging assurances, because on a variety of occasions your grace had testified a full approbation of my conduct, had thank'd me in the most flattering terms as the person the most usefull to the common cause in which we were embark'd, and had shewn an uncommon zeal to serve a man who had suffer'd so much in the cause of liberty.

I returned to England with the gayest, and the most lively hopes. As soon as I arriv'd at London, I desir'd my excellent friend, Mr. *Fitzberbert*, to wait on your grace, with every profession of regard on my part, and the resolution I had taken of entirely submitting the mode of the application I shou'd make to the throne for my pardon. I cannot express the anxiety, which your grace's answer gave me, *Mr. Wilkes must write to Lord Chatham*. I then beg'd Mr. *Fitzberbert* to state the reasons, which made it impossible for me to follow that advice, from every principle of honour, both public and private. I shew'd too the impropriety of supplicating a fellow subject for mercy, the prerogative

good Kings are the most jealous of, by far the brightest jewel in their crown, and the attribute, by which they may the nearest approach to the Divinity.

I afterwards wrote the letter to your grace, which I have seen in all the public prints. I never receiv'd any other answer but a *verbal* message, Mr. *Wilkes must write to Lord Chatham: I do nothing without Lord Chatham*. When I found that my pardon was to be bought with the sacrifice of my honour, I had the virtue not to hesitate. I spurn'd at the proposal, and left my dear native London with a heart full of grief that my fairest hopes were blasted, of humiliation that I had given an easy faith to the promises of a Minister and a Courtier, and of astonishment that a nobleman of parts and discernment cou'd continue in an infatuation, from which the conduct of *Lord Chatham* had recover'd every other man in the nation. He was indeed long the favourite character of our countrymen. Every tongue was wanton in his praise. The whole people lavish'd on him their choicest favours, and endeavour'd by

the noblest means, by an unbounded generosity and confidence, to have kept him virtuous. With what anguish were we at last undeceiv'd! How much it cost us to give up a man, who had so long entirely kept possession of our hearts! How cruel was the struggle! But alas! how is he chang'd? how fallen? from what height fallen? His glorious sun is set, I believe never to rise again.

We long hop'd, my Lord, that public virtue was the *guide* of his actions, and the love of our country his ruling passion, but he has fully shewn *omnis vis virtusque in lingua sita est*. Our hearts glow'd with gratitude for the important services he had done against the common enemy, and the voice of the nation hail'd him our deliverer; but private ambition was all the while skulking behind the shield of the patriot, and at length in an evil hour made him quit the scene of all his glory, the only place, in which he cou'd be truly usefull, for a retreat, where he knew it was impossible the confidence of the people cou'd follow,

but where he might in inglorious ease
bear his *BLUSHING* honours thick
upon him.

I might now, my Lord, expostulate
with your grace on a *verbal* message,
and of such a nature, in answer to a
letter couch'd in the most decent and
respectfull terms, coming too from a
late member of the legislature. I might
regret, that the largest proffers of friends-
hip, and real service, cou'd mean no
more than two or three words of cold
advice, that I shou'd apply to another. I
might be tempted to think it a duty of
office in the first Lord of the Treasury to
have submitted to his Majesty a petition
relative to the exercise of the noblest
act of regal power, which any consti-
tution can give any sovereign. Surely,
my Lord, my application to the first
Commissioner of the Treasury, who
is always consider'd as the first Minis-
ter in England, was the very proper
application. As I had made no disco-
very of any new wonderfull pill or drop,
nor pretended to the secret of curing the
gout or the tooth ach, I never thought
of soliciting *Lord Chatham* for a *privy seal*.
His Lordship's office was neither impor-

tant , nor responsible. I will not however enlarge on this , but I shall desire your grace's permission fully to state what has happen'd to me as a private gentleman relative to *Lord Chatbam* , because I wou'd not leave a doubt concerning the propriety of my conduct , in a mind naturally so candid , and so capable of judging truly , as that of the *Duke of Grafton*.

I believe that the flinty heart of *Lord Chatbam* has known the sweets of private friendship , and the fine feelings of humanity , as little as even Lord Mansfield. They are both form'd to be admir'd not belov'd. A proud , insolent , overbearing , ambitious man is always full of the ideas of his own importance , and vainly imagines himself superior to the equality necessary among real friends , in all the moments of true enjoyment. Friendship is too pure a pleasure for a mind canker'd with ambition , or the lust of power and grandeur. *Lord Chatbam* declar'd in Parliament the strongest attachment to *Lord Temple* , one of the greatest characters our country cou'd ever boast , and

said he *wou'd live and die with his noble brother*. He has receiv'd obligations of the first magnitude from that *noble brother*, yet what trace of gratitude or of friendship was ever found in any part of his conduct? and has he not now declar'd the most open variance, and even hostility? I have had as warm and express declarations of regard as cou'd be made by this marble-hearted friend, and *Mr. Pitt* had no doubt his views in even feeding me with flattery from time to time; on occasions too where candour and indulgence were all I cou'd claim. He may remember the compliments he paid me on two certain poems in the year 1754. If I were to take the declarations made by himself and the late *Mr Potter à la lettre*, they were more charm'd with those verses after the ninety ninth reading than after the first; so that from this circumstance, as well as a few of his speeches in parliament, it seems to be likewise true of the first orator, or rather the first comedian, of our age, *non displicuisse illi jocos, sed non contigisse*.

I will now submit to your grace, if there was not something peculiarly base and perfidious in *Mr. Pitt's* calling me a *blasphemer of my God* for those very verses, at a time when I was absent, and dangerously ill from an affair of honour. The charge too he knew was false, for the whole ridicule of those two pieces was confin'd to certain mysteries, which formerly the *unplac'd and unpension'd Mr. Pitt* did not think himself oblig'd even to affect to believe. He added another charge equally unjust, that I was the *libeller of my king*, tho' he was sensible that I never wrote a single line disrespectfull to the sacred person of my sovereign, but had only attack'd the despotism of his ministers, with the spirit becoming a good subject, and zealous friend of his country. The reason of this perfidy was plain. He was then beginning to pay homage to the *Scottish Idol*, and I was the most acceptable sacrifice he cou'd offer at the shrine of *BUTÉ*. History scarcely gives so remarkable a change. He was a few years ago the mad, seditious Tribune of the People, insulting his

Sovereign even in his capital city, now he is the abject, crouching deputy of the proud Scot, who he declar'd in Parliament *wanted wisdom, and held principles incompatible with freedom*; a most ridiculous character surely for a statesman, and the subject of a free kingdom, but the very proper composition for a *favourite*. Was it possible for me after this to write a suppliant letter to *Lord Chatham*? I am the first to pronounce myself most unworthy of a pardon, if I cou'd have obtain'd it on those terms.

Altho' I declare, my Lord, that the conscious pride of virtue makes me look down with contempt on a man, who cou'd be guilty of this baseness, who cou'd in the lobby declare that I must be supported, and in the House on the same day desert and revile me, yet I will on every occasion do justice to the Minister. He has serv'd the public in all those points, where the good of the nation coincided with his own private views; and in no other. I venerate the memory of the Secretary, and I think it an honour to myself that I steadily supported in

Parliament an administration, the most successful we ever had, and which carried the glory of the nation to the highest pitch in every part of the world. He found his country almost in despair. He rais'd the noble spirit of England, and strain'd every nerve against our enemies. His plans, when in power, were always great, tho' in direct opposition to the declarations of his whole life, when out of power. The invincible bravery of the British troops gave success even to the most rash, the most extravagant; the most desperate of his projects. He saw early the hostile intentions of Spain, and if the *written advice* had been follow'd, a very few weeks had then probably clos'd the last general war; altho' the merit of that *advice* was more the merit of his *noble brother*, than his own. After the omnipotence of Lord Bute in 1761, had forc'd Mr. Pitt to retire from his Majesty's Councils, and the cause was declar'd by himself to be our conduct relative to Spain, I had the happiness of setting that affair in so clear and advantageous a light, that

he express'd the most entire satisfaction, and particular obligations to my friendship. I do not however make this a claim of merit to Mr. Pitt. It was my duty, from the peculiar advantages of information I then had.

The constitution of our country has no obligations to him. He has left it with all its beauties, and all its' blemishes. He never once appear'd in earnest about any question of liberty. He was the cause that in 1764 no point was gain'd for the public in the two great questions of GENERAL WARRANTS, and the SEIZURE OF PAPERS. The cursed remains of the court of Star Chamber, the enormous power of the Attorney General, the sole great judicial officer of the crown, who is *durante bene placito*, and not upon oath, who tramples on *Grand Juries*, and breaks down the first, the foremost barriers of liberty, continued during his administration the same as before. Every grievance, which was not rooted out by the glorious Revolution, and the latter struggles of our patriots, still subsists in full force, notwithstanding the

absolute power he exercis'd for several years over every department of the state. But I have done with *Lord Chatbam*. I leave him to the poor consolation of a place, a pension, and a peerage, for which he has sold the confidence of a great nation. Pity shall find, and weep over him.

I am now, my Lord, once more driven from the *Romans* to the gay, the polite *Athenians*, but I shall endeavour to convince your grace that I am not totally lost to my country nor to myself, in this scene of elegant dissipation, and that I do not waste the time in unavailing complaints of my hard fate, and the ingratitude of those I have serv'd with success, for I shall very soon beg to call the public attention to some points of national importance, and in the mean time I shall embrace this opportunity of doing myself justice against the calumnies, which a restless faction does not cease to propagate.

The affair of the GENERAL WARRANT, and the HABEAS CORPUS, is told very unfaithfully, and almost every particular, relative to my being made a prisoner, and sent to the Tower on the

30th of April 1763, has been injuriously misrepresented in several late publications. I shall therefore state the transactions of that memorable day, and I may appeal to the minutes taken at the time for the accuracy of this relation.

On my return from the city early in the morning, I met at the end of Great George Street one of the King's Messengers. He told me that he had a *warrant* to apprehend me, which he must execute immediately, and that I must attend him to Lord Halifax's. I desir'd to see the *warrant*. He said it was *against the authors, printers, and publishers of the North Briton*, n^o. 45, and that his verbal orders were to arrest *Mr. Wilkes*. I told him the *warrant* did not respect me: I advis'd him to be very civil, and to use no violence in the street, for if he attempted force, I wou'd put him to death in the instant, but if he wou'd come quietly to my house, I wou'd convince him of the illegality of the *warrant*, and the injustice of the orders he had receiv'd. He chose to accompany me home, and then

produc'd the GENERAL WARRANT. I declar'd that such a *warrant* was absolutely illegal and void in itself, that it was a ridiculous *warrant* against the whole English nation, and I ask'd why he wou'd serve it on me, rather than on the Lord Chancellor, on either of the Secretaries, on Lord Bute, or Lord Corke, my next door neighbour. The answer was, *I am to arrest Mr Wilkes*. About an hour afterwards two other Messengers arriv'd, and several of their assistants. They all endeavour'd in vain to persuade me to accompany them to Lord Halifax's. I had likewise many civil messages from his Lordship to desire my attendance. My only answer was, that I had not the honour of visiting his Lordship, and this first application was rather rude and ungentlemanlike.

While some of the Messengers and their assistants were with me, *Mr Churchill* came into the room. I had heard that their *verbal* orders were likewise to apprehend him, but I suspected they did not know his person, and by presence of mind I had the happiness of saving my friend. As soon as Mr

Churchill enter'd the room, I accosted him, *Good morrow, Mr Thomson. How does Mrs Thomson do to-day? Does she dine in the country?* *Mr Churchill* thank'd me, said she then waited for him, that he only came for a moment to ask me how I did, and almost directly took his leave. He went home immediately, secur'd all his papers, and retir'd into the country. The Messengers cou'd never get intelligence where he was. The following week he came to town, and was present both the days of hearing at the court of Common Pleas.

The whole morning pass'd in messages between Lord Halifax and me. The business of the Messengers being soon publicly known, several of my friends came to me on so extraordinary an event. I desir'd two or three of them to go to the court of COMMON PLEAS, to make affidavit of my being made a prisoner in my own house under an illegal *warrant*, and to demand the HABEAS CORPUS. The Chief Justice gave orders that it should issue immediately.

A constable came afterwards with several assistants to the Messengers. I

repeatedly insisted on their all leaving me , and declar'd I wou'd not suffer any one of them to continue in the room against my consent , for I knew and wou'd support the rights of an Englishman in the sanctuary of his own house. I was then threaten'd with immediate violence , and a regiment of the guards , if necessary. I soon found all resistance wou'd be vain. The constable demanded my sword , and insisted on my immediately attending the Messengers to Lord Halifax's. I replied, that if they were not assassins , they shou'd first give me their names in writing. They complied with this , and thirteen set their hands to the paper. I then got into my own chair , and proceeded to Lord Halifax's , guarded by the Messengers and their assistants.

I was conducted into a great apartment fronting the park , where Lord Halifax and Lord Egremont , the two Secretaries of state , were sitting at a table cover'd with paper , pens and ink. The under - secretaries stood near their lordships. Mr Lovel Stanhope, the law clerk, and Mr Philip Carteret Webb, the solicitor of the Treasury , were the

only persons besides who attended. Lord Egremont receiv'd me with a supercilious, insolent air; Lord Halifax with great politeness. I was desir'd to take the chair near their Lordships, which I did. Lord Halifax then began, *that he was really concern'd that he had been necessitated to proceed in that manner against me, that it was exceedingly to be regretted that a gentleman of my rank and abilities cou'd engage against his King, and his Majesty's government.* I replied, *that his Lordship cou'd not be more mistaken, for the King had not a subject more zealously attach'd to his person and government than myself, that I had all my life been a warm friend of the House of Brunswick, and the Protestant Succession, that while I made the truest professions of duty to the King, I was equally free to declare in the same moment, that I believ'd no Prince had ever the misfortune of being serv'd by such ignorant, insolent, and despotic ministers, of which my being there was a fresh, glaring proof, for I was brought before their Lordships by force, under a GENERAL WARRANT, which nam'd no body, in violation of the laws of my country, and of the privileges of Parlia-*

ment, that I beg'd both their Lordships to remember my present declaration, that on the very first day of the ensuing session of Parliament, I wou'd stand up in my place and impeach them for the outrage they had committed in my person against the liberties of the people. Lord Halifax answer'd, that nothing had been done but by the advice of the best lawyers, and that it was now his duty to examine me. He had in his hand a long list of questions, regularly number'd. He began, *Mr. Wilkes, do you know Mr. Kearsly? when did you see him? &c. &c.* I replied, that I suspected there was a vain hope my answer wou'd tend rather to what his Lordship wish'd to know, that he seem'd to be lost in a dark, and intricate path, and really wanted much light to guide him thro' it, but that I cou'd assure his Lordship not a single ray shou'd come from me. Lord Halifax return'd to the charge, *Mr. Wilkes, do you know Mr. Kearsly? &c. &c.* I said, that this was a curiosity on his Lordship's part, which however laudable in the secretary, I did not find myself disposed to gratify, and that at the end of my examination all the quires of paper on their Lordships' table shou'd be as milk white as at the beginning.

Lord Halifax then *desir'd to remind me of my being their prisoner, and of their right to examine me.* I answer'd, *that I shou'd imagine their Lordships' time was too precious to be trifled away in that manner, that they might have seen before I would never say one word they desir'd to know, and I added, Indeed, my Lords, I am not made of such slight, flimsy stuff;* then turning to Lord Egremont, I said, *Cou'd you employ tortures, I wou'd never utter a word unbecoming my honour, or affecting the sacred confidence of any friend. God has given me firmness and fidelity. You trifle away your time most egregiously, my Lords.* Lord Halifax then *advise'd me to weigh well the consequences of my conduct, and the advantages to myself of a generous, frank confession.* I lamented the prostitution of the word, GENEROUS, to what I shou'd consider as an act of the utmost treachery, cowardice, and wickedness. His Lordship then ask'd me, *If I chose to be a prisoner in my own house, at the Tower, or in Newgate, for he was dispos'd to oblige me.* I gave his Lordship my thanks, but I *desir'd to remark, that I never receiv'd an obligation, but from a friend,*

that I demanded justice, and my immediate liberty, as an Englishman, who had not offended the laws of his country; that as to the rest, it was beneath my attention, the odious idea of restraint was the same odious idea every where; that I wou'd go where I pleas'd, and if I was restrain'd by a superior force, I must yield to the violence, but wou'd never give colour to it by a shameful compromise; that every thing was indifferent to me in comparison of my honour and my liberty; that I made my appeal to the laws, and had already by my friends applied to the COURT OF COMMON PLEAS for the HABEAS CORPUS, which the Chief Justice had actually order'd to be issued, and that I hop'd to owe my discharge solely to my innocence, and to the vigour of the law in a free country. Lord Halifax then told me, that I shou'd be sent to the Tower, where I shou'd be treated in a manner suitable to my rank, and that he hop'd the Messengers had behav'd well to me. I acknowledg'd that they had behav'd with humanity, and even civility to me, notwithstanding the ruffian orders given them by his Lordship's Colleague. I then again turn'd to Lord Egremont, and said,

Your Lordship's verbal orders were to drag me out of my bed at midnight. The first man, who had enter'd my bedchamber by force, I shou'd have laid dead on the spot. Probably I shou'd have fallen in the skirmish with the others. I thank God, not your Lordship, that such a scene of blood has been avoided. Your Lordship is very ready to issue orders, which you have neither the courage to sign, nor I believe to justify. No reply was made to this. The conversation drop'd. Lord Halifax retir'd into another apartment. Lord Egremont continued sullen and silent, about a quarter of an hour. I then made a few remarks on some capital pictures, which were in the room, and his Lordship left me alone.

I was afterwards conducted into another apartment. I found there several of my friends, in argument with the most infamous of all the tools of that administration, Mr. Philip Carteret Webb. He confirm'd to me, that I was to be carried to the Tower, and wish'd to know if I had any favours to ask. I replied, that I was used to confer, not to receive, favours, that I was superior to the receiving any even from his Masters,

that all I wou'd say to him was, if my valet de chambre was allowed to attend me in the Tower, I shou'd be shav'd and have a clean shirt, if he was not, I shou'd have a long beard, and dirty linen. Mr. Webb laid, that orders wou'd be given for his admission at the Tower. I complain'd of the shamefull evasion of the *Habeas Corpus*, in sending me to the Tower, tho' the orders of the Chief Justice Pratt were known. Mr. Webb made no reply to this. He came to visit me at the Tower in the beginning of my imprisonment, when I had not the permission to see any friend. I desir'd him almost at his first entrance to take his leave, for if I was not allow'd to see those I lov'd, I wou'd not see those I despis'd.

While I continued in the Tower, I was press'd to offer bail in order to regain my liberty, and two of the first nobility desir'd to be my securities in the sum of L. 100,000 each. I was exceedingly gratefull for the offer, but wou'd not accept it. I observ'd, that neither my health, nor my spirits, were affected, that I wou'd by great temperance and abstinence endeavour to
compensate

compensate the want of air and exercise, but if my health suffer'd in a dangerous way, I wou'd then accept such generous offers, for I hop'd to live that so noble a cause might be brought to a glorious issue for the liberties of my country. From the beginning of this arduous business, I wou'd not on any occasion give bail, by which I never involv'd any friend, and remain'd the perfect master of my own conduct.

I shall now, my Lord, proceed to do myself justice against a calumny of *Sir John Cust*, a person of the meanest natural parts, and infinitely beneath all regard, except from the office he bears, with the utmost discredit to himself, with equal disgrace and insufficiency to the public. I find in the volume of the *Journals of the House of Commons*, just publish'd, vol. 29. p. 721. "Jovis 19^o die Januarii 1764. Mr. Speaker acquainted the House, that he, upon Tuesday last, receiv'd a Letter by the General Post from Mr. Wilkes, dated Paris the 11th Instant, inclosing a paper in the French Language,

B.

"purporting to be a certificate of
 "one of the French King's Physicians,
 "and of a Surgeon of the said King's
 "Army, relating to the state of Mr
 "Wilkes's health, subscribed with
 "Two Names, but not authenticated
 "before a Notary Public, nor the
 "Signature thereof verified in any
 "Manner whatsoever". Then fol-
 low the *letter* and *certificate*. The infi-
 nuation is too plain to be over-
 look'd, too false to be forgiven. The
 signature was verified by my letter. It
 is certain that the certificate was in all
 the usual forms; yet tho' the affair was
 determin'd with respect to me, and I
 was indecently expell'd the *House of*
Commons on the same day, without
 any time being allow'd for other
 proof, a regard to truth, and
 my own honour, made me give the
 most compleat answer to this wretched
 subterfuge of the abandon'd *Majority*.
 I sent a second certificate in the unusual
 form they had prescrib'd themselves,
 attested by two notaries, and con-
 firm'd by the English Embassador.
 I wrote likewise again to the Speaker
 on the 5th of February following,

but neither the second letter, certificate, or attestation, is to be found in the *Journals*, as they ought in justice to my character. I have however, my Lord, taken care that they shou'd be publish'd, for in a free government like ours, I will endeavour thro' my life to emulate the spirit of antient Rome, *pro-voco ad populum*; and while the people do not condemn me, I shall, perhaps in this, most certainly in every succeeding age, rise superior to any party cabal, or court faction. This step cover'd my enemies with confusion, but was of no farther service to me. The party war against me ceas'd of course in the *House of Commons*, but flam'd with equal fury in *Westminster Hall*, and was attended with every circumstance of revenge and cruelty, which the ingenious wit of a Mansfield cou'd devise to gratify the malice of a bad heart.

By the same JOURNALS, page 723, I find that I am voted *guilty of writing and publishing the paper, intituled "The North Briton, N^o 45"*, and that several witnesses were examin'd. There is not however in the JOURNALS a sin-

gle word of the evidence they gave, and it is well known that not one of them did, or cou'd, say any thing relative to the *anthorship*. The evidence of the *publication* was exceeding slight, but the willingness of the judges made ample amends for the deficiency of the witnesses, who were not upon oath. The Administration did not chuse to risk either of these charges against me even in the court of King's Bench, and I was only tried for a *re-publication*. I will never blush at the imputation of being the *author* of that paper, because I know that truth is respected in every line. One circumstance will soon fully appear to the indignant public. I mean the large debt on the *Civil List*, contracted chiefly by the scandalous purchase of a Parliamentary approbation of the late ignominious *Peace*, the arbitrary *Excise*, and other ruinous measures of the *Scottish* minister. But I leave the affair of the *Civil List* to a future exact discussion.

The last calumny, my Lord, which I shall disprove, respects the actions at law against Lord Halifax. It is said that I have neglected, or purposely discon-

tinued them , since my exile. The imputation is totally groundless. I was so ill at Paris in the beginning of the year 1764 that it was impossible for me then to return to England alive , but I gave the most express orders that the law proceedings shou'd be carried on with vigour , and in fact there was not a moment's delay. When my wound began to heal in the spring , I was dissuaded by all my friends from returning to a country , where the same administration , which had illegally seiz'd my person , plunder'd my house , corrupted the fidelity of my servants , and by the wicked arts of an arbitrary Judge , who caus'd the *records to be falsified* , had just obtain'd two verdicts against me , were still in full power. I yielded to these reasons , because *propter eorum scelus , nihil mihi intra meos parietes tutum , nihil insidiis vacuum viderem*. Lord Halifax for near two years avail'd himself of every advantage , which privilege and the chicane of law cou'd furnish. He never enter'd any appearance to a Court of Justice , and the Common Pleas had , as far as they cou'd , punish'd such an

open contempt, such a daring proof that *Administration* wou'd not submit to the *law of the land*, and had endeavour'd to compel his Lordship to appear. Towards the end of 1764 I was *outlaw'd*. The proceedings continued against his Lordship till that hour. He then appear'd, and his single plea was, that as an *outlaw*, I cou'd not hold any action. No other defence was made against the heinous charge of having in my person violated the rights of the people.

I felt this, my Lord, as the most cruel stroke, which fortune had given me. Justice had at length overtaken many of the inferior criminals, but my *out-lawry* prevented my punishing, the great, the capital offender, when after all his subterfuges, he was almost within my reach. I please myself however with the reflexion that no minister has since dar'd to issue a GENERAL WARRANT, nor to sign an order for the SEIZURE OF PAPERS. In the one the personal liberty of every subject is immediately concern'd. On the other may depend not only his own safety and property, but what will come

still more home to a man of honour, the security, the happiness of those, with whom he is most intimately connected, their fortunes, their future views, perhaps secrets, the discovery of which would drive the coldest stoic to despair, their very existence possibly, all that is important in the public walk of life, all that is dear and sacred in friendship and in love. I was the *last* oppress'd, but I was the *first* man, who had the courage to carry thro' a just resistance to these acts of despotism. Now the opinions of our sovereign Courts of Justice are known and establish'd. I rejoice that several others, who suffer'd before me, have since made their appeal to the laws, and obtain'd redress. I hope the iron rod of ministerial oppression is at length broken, and that I am the last victim of violence and cruelty. I shall not then regret all the sacrifices I have made, and my mind shall feast itself with the recollection in the unjust exile I am doom'd to suffer from my friends and my native land.

I will now, my Lord, only add,

however unfashionable such a declaration may be, that consistency shall never depart from my character, that to the last moment I will preserve the same fix'd and unconquerable hatred to the enemies of freedom and the constitution of our happy island, the same warm attachment to the friends and the cause of liberty, that I keep a steady and a longing eye on England, that my endeavours for the good and service of my country, by every method left me, shall have a period only with my life, and that altho' I do not mean to lay any future claim to your grace's favour, I will take care to secure your esteem.

I am, my Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient,
and very humble servant,
JOHN WILKES.

Gratias tibi , D E U S optume, maxu-
me , cujus nutu & imperio nata est &
aucta RES ANGLICANA , lubens lætuf-
que ago , LIBERTATE PUBLICA in hanc
diem & horam , per manus , quod vo-
luisti , meas , servatâ , eandem & in
æternum serva , fove , protege pro-
pitiate , supplex oro.

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